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POL 14 VIETS

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Action

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FE VV MJA783JIA311
Info RR RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 6933 2690750
ZNY CCCCC
SS R 260637Z SEP 66
G FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
SP TO SECSTATE WASHDC
SAH STATE GRNC
L BT
H C O N F I D E N T I A L Saigon 6933
TO SEPT 26
P
SIA FOLL IS AMCONSUL DANANG'S 138 DATED SEPT 25 SIGNED FRANCIS
NSC
INR DE RUMNMF 494 2680408
CIA ZNY CCCCC
NSA P R 250408Z SEP 66
DOD FM CG III MAF
AID TO RUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON
INFO RUMNVH/AMCONSUL HUE
BT
RSR C O N F I D E N T I A L

POLAD FRANCIS SENDS SAIGON NR. 138 HUE NOV.

1. HAVE RECENTLY HAD OPPORTUNITY, THROUGH COUNTY FAIR OPERATIONS THIS AREA, TO DISCUSS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WITH PEOPLE, LIVING UNDER DEFACTO COMMUNIST POLITICAL CONTROL ON SEPTEMBER 11. SAMPLE SMALL BUT IF REPRESENTATIVE WOULD INDICATE THAT SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF VILLAGERS LIVING UNDER VIET CONG CONTROL IN THIS AREA DID KNOW OF ELECTIONS.

2. ORIGINAL SOURCE OF VILLAGERS INFORMATION UNCERTAIN. FEW OF THOSE SPOKEN WITH SAID THAT THEY HAD SEEN ANY GOVERNMENT LITERATURE ON THIS SUBJECT. MOST SAID THAT SOMEONE HAD TOLD THEM ABOUT ELECTIONS. ALL WHO KNEW ABOUT ELECTIONS ALSO OF COURSE, CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT COMMUNISTS WERE OPPOSED TO THEM.

3. PEOPLE APPEARED TO BE QUITE INTERESTED IN ELECTIONS AND CONSIDERABLE NUMBER ACTIVELY SOUGHT INFORMATION ABOUT THEM. NONE OF PERSONS

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izgubeig DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
10 AUTH. REASON(S)
E. DCRSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
FOI EXEMPTIONS

Saigon 6933
9-26-66

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SPOKEN WITH KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT CANDIDATES NOR DID THEY HAVE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT WHAT "NATIONAL ASSEMBLE" WAS GOING TO DO.

4. PERSONS SPOKEN WITH APPEARED TO BE IMPRESSED WITH ELECTION STATISTICS BUT CLEARLY DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT TO BELIEVE THEM.

5. SOME AREAS VISITED HAD BEEN UNDER VIET CONG CONTROL FOR AS LONG AS THREE YEARS. THE PEOPLE THERE WERE UNDERSTANDABLY RELUCTANT TO SPEAK ABOUT COMMUNISTS, PARTICULARLY SINCE MANY OF THEM HAD CLOSE RELATIVES IN VIET CONG. EVEN SO, HOWEVER, SEVERAL PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED THAT THEY WOULD PROBABLY HAVE VOTED IF VIET CONG HAD ALLOWED IT.

6. ONE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN SUMMED UP VILLAGERS POSITION BY SAYING THAT HE KNEW GOVERNMENT WANTED HIM TO VOTE AND VIET CONG WANTED HIM NOT TO VOTE. GOVERNMENT WAS NOT IN HIS VILLAGE, VIET CONG WERE, SO HE DIDN'T VOTE. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HAD HIS VILLAGE BEEN UNDER GVN CONTROL HE VERY WELL MIGHT HAVE VOTED.

7. COMMENT: BASIC ATTITUDE OF PERSONS SPOKEN WITH IN VIET CONG AREAS VERY SIMILIAR TO THAT OF VILLAGERS LIVING IN GVN AREAS. PEOPLE SEEM TO HAVE MILD BUT GENUINE INTEREST IN ELECTIONS AND UNDERSTAND VERY LITTLE ABOUT THEM. AS WOULD BE EXPECTED VILLAGERS UNDER COMMUNIST CONTROL RECEIVED LESS SPECIFIC INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM GVN AND THUS WERE FORCED TO DEPEND ALMOST ENTIRELY ON VILLAGE GRAPEVINE FOR POSITIVE SIDE OF STORY.

8. COMMUNISTS WERE OBVIOUSLY ABLE TO GET THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE ELECTIONS ACCROSS TO THE PEOPLE. THEY APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MUCH LESS SUCCESSFUL IN EXPLAINING WHY THEY WERE OPPOSED TO THEM, HOWEVER. BASIC PROBLEM COMMUNISTS FACED APPEARS TO BE VERY SIMILIAR TO THAT GVN FACED. PEOPLE DON'T APPEAR TO UNDERSTAND CONCEPT IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ITS FUNCTION, OR LARGER POLITICAL PICTURE OF WHICH IT IS A PART. VILLAGERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE SECURITY FENCE KNEW THAT GVN FOR ELECTIONS, VIET CONG AGAINST. IN THE VILLAGERS EYES THOSE WHO VOTED WERE "FOLLOWING" COMMUNIST LEAD.

POLAD FRANCIS SENDS
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